

TWO MAJOR COMMENTS

The airwaves are to be free, not up for bid to monopolies and those with the most financial backing. A local station, KFAR, in Knoxville, TN, has been refused the opportunity to broadcast, and it looks political. Local FCC agents did this and it is not a threat to our community for this independent station to broadcast; it's a necessity in a free diversified society. Where has that gone? We need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them.

Secondly, Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.